Numb. 115

The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

—— Novum intervenit Vitium & Calamitas,
Ut neque ſpectari, neque cognoſci potuerit:
Ita Populus Studio ſtupidus in Funambulo
Animum occuparat. Ter. de Hecyra.

From *Saturday December* 31. to *Tueſday January* 3. 1709.

Sheer-Lane, January 2.

I WENT on *Friday* laſt to the Opera, and was ſurpriſed to find a thin Houſe at ſo noble an Entertainment; till I heard that the Tumbler was not to make his Appearance that Night. For my own Part, I was fully ſatisfied with the Sight of an Actor, who, by the Grace and Propriety of his Action and Geſture, does Honour to an human Figure, as much as the other vilifies and degrades it. Every one will eaſily imagine I mean Signior *Nicolini*, who ſets off the Character he bears in an Opera by his Action, as much as he does the Words of it by his Voice. Every Limb, and every Finger, contributes to the Part he acts, inſomuch that a deaf Man might go along with him in the Senſe of it. There is ſcarce a beautiful Poſture in an old Statue which he does not plant himſelf in, as the different Circumſtances of the Story give Occaſion for it. He performs the moſt ordinary Action in a Manner ſuitable to the Greatneſs of his Character, and ſhows the Prince even in the giving of a Letter or the diſpatching of a Meſſage. Our beſt Actors are ſomewhat at a Loſs to ſupport themſelves with proper Geſture, as they move from any conſiderable Diſtance to the Front of the Stage; but I have ſeen the Perſon of whom I am now ſpeaking, enter alone at the remoteſt Part of it, and advance from it with ſuch Greatneſs of Air and Mien, as ſeemed to fill the Stage, and at the ſame Time commanded the Attention of the Audience with the Majeſty of his Appearance. But notwithſtanding the Dignity and Elegance of this Entertainment, I find for ſome Nights paſt, that *Punchinello* has robbed this Gentleman of the greater Part of his Female Spectators. The Truth of it is, I find it ſo very hard a Taſk to keep that Sex under any Manner of Government, that I have often reſolved to give them over intirely, and leave them to their own Inventions. I was in Hopes that I had brought them to ſome Order, and was employing my Thoughts on the Reformation of their Petticoats, when on a ſudden I received Information from all Parts, that they run gadding after a Puppet-Show. I know very well, that what I have ſaid will be thought by ſome malicious Perſons to flow from Envy to Mr. *Powell*; for which Reaſon, I ſhall ſet the late Diſpute between us in a true Light. Mr. *Powell* and I had ſome Difference about Four Months ago, which we managed by way of Letter, as learned Men ought to do; and I was very well contented to bear ſuch Sarcaſms as he was pleaſed to throw upon me, and anſwered them with the ſame Freedom. In the Midſt of this our Miſunderſtanding and Correſpondence, I happened to give the World an Account of the Order of *Eſquires*; upon which, Mr. *Powell* was ſo diſingenuous, as to make one of his Puppets (I wiſh I knew which of them it was) declare by way of Prologue, That one *Iſaac Bickerſtaff*, a Pretended *Eſquire*, had wrote a ſcurrilous Piece to the Diſhonour of that Rank of Men; and then, with more Art than Honeſty, concluded, That all the *Eſquires* in the Pit were abuſed by his Antagoniſt as much as he was. This publick Accuſation made all the *Eſquires* of that County, and ſeveral of other Parts, my profeſſed Enemies. I do not in the leaſt queſtion, but that he will proceed in his Hoſtilities; and I am informed, That Part of his Deſign in coming up to Town, was to carry the War into my own Quarters. I do therefore ſolemnly declare, (notwithſtanding that I am a great Lover of Art and Ingenuity) that if I hear he opens any of his People's Mouths againſt me, I ſhall not fail to write a Critick upon his whole Performance; for I muſt confeſs, that I have naturally ſo ſtrong a Deſire of Praiſe, that I cannot bear Reproach, tho' from a Piece of Timber. As for *Punch*, who takes all Opportunities of beſputtering me, I know very well his Original, and have been aſſured by the Joyner who put him together, that he was in long Diſpute with himſelf, whether he ſhould turn him into ſeveral Pegs and Utenſils, or make him the Man he is. The ſame Perſon confeſs'd to me, that he had once actually laid aſide his Head for a Nut-cracker. As for his Scolding Wife, (however ſhe may value her ſelf at preſent) it is very well known, that ſhe is but a Piece of Crabtree. This Artificer further whiſpered in my Ear, that all his Courtiers and Nobles were taken out of a Quickſet Hedge not far from *Iſlington*; and that Dr. *Fauſtus* himſelf, who is now ſo great a Conjurer, is ſuppoſed to have learned his whole Art from an old Woman in that Neighbourhood, whom he long ſerved in the Figure of a Broomſtaff.

But perhaps it may look trivial to inſiſt ſo much upon Men's Perſons; I ſhall therefore turn my Thoughts rather to examine their Behaviour, and conſider, whether the ſeveral Parts are written up to that Character which Mr. *Powell* piques himſelf upon, of an able and judicious Dramatiſt. I have for this Purpoſe provided my ſelf with the Works of above Twenty *French* Criticks, and ſhall examine, (by the Rules which they have laid down upon the Art of the Stage) whether the Unity of Time, Place and Action, be rightly obſerved in any one of this celebrated Author's Productions; as al-

ſo,

ſo, whether in the Parts of his ſeveral Actors, and that of *Punch* in Particular, there is not ſometimes an Impropriety of Sentiments, and an Impurity of Diction.

White's Chocolate-Houſe, January 2.

I came in here to Day at an Hour when only the Dead appear in Places of Reſort and Gallantry, and ſaw hung up the Eſcutcheon of Sir *Hannibal*, a Gentleman who uſed to frequent this Place, and was taken up and interred by the Company of Upholders, as having been ſeen here at an unlicenſed Hour. The Coat of the Deceaſed is, Three Bowls and a Jack in a green Field; the Creſt, a Dice-Box, with the King of Clubs and Pam for Supporters. Some Days ago the Body was carried out of Town with great Pomp and Ceremony, in order to be buried with his Anceſtors at the *Peak*. It is a Maxim in Morality, That we are to ſpeak nothing but Truth of the Living, nothing but Good of the Dead. As I have carefully obſerved the firſt during his Life-time, I ſhall acquit my ſelf as to the latter now he is deceaſed.

He was Knighted very young, not in the ordinary Form, but by the common Conſent of Mankind.

He was in his Perſon between round and ſquare; In the Motion and Geſture of his Body he was unaffected and free, as not having too great a Reſpect for Superiors. He was in his Diſcourſe bold and intrepid; and as every one has an Excellence as well as a Failing which diſtinguiſhes him from other Men, Eloquence was his predominant Quality, which he had to ſo great a Perfection, that it was eaſier to him to ſpeak than to hold his Tongue. This ſometimes expoſed him to the Deriſion of Men who had much leſs Parts than himſelf: And indeed his great Volubility and ineſtimable Manner of Speaking, as well as the great Courage he ſhew'd on thoſe Occaſions, did ſometimes betray him into that Figure of Speech which is commonly diſtinguiſh'd by the Name of Gaſconade. To mention no other, he profeſs'd in this very Place ſome few Days before he died, That he would be One of the Six that would undertake to aſſault me; for which Reaſon I have had his Figure upon my Wall till the Hour of his Death: And am reſolved for the Future to bury every one forthwith who I hear has an Intention to kill me.

Since I am upon the Subject of my Adverſaries, I ſhall here publiſh a ſhort Letter which I have received from a Well-wiſher, and is as follows:

Sage SIR,

YOU cannot but know, there are many Scriblers and others who revile you and your Writings. It is wondered that you do not exert your ſelf, and cruſh them at once.

I am, SIR,

(With great Reſpect)

Your moſt humble Admirer and Diſciple.

In Anſwer to this, I ſhall act like my Predeceſſor *Æſop*, and give him a Fable inſtead of a Reply.

It happen'd one Day, as a ſtout and honeſt Maſtiff (that guarded the Village where he liv'd againſt Thieves and Robbers) was very gravely walking, with one of his Puppies by his Side, all the little Dogs in the Street gather'd about him, and barked at him. The little Puppy was ſo offended at this Affront done to his Sire, that he ask'd him, Why he would not fall upon them, and tear them to Pieces? To which the Sire anſwered, with a great Compoſure of Mind, *If there were no Curs, I ſhould be no Maſtiff.*

ERRATA, in our laſt, Col. 1. Line 42. read *I liſtened*, for *I have liſtened*. Col 2. L. 2. read *Pains*, for *Pangs*. L. 25. read *Swellings* for *Swelling*. L. 44. read *Method* for *Expreſſion*. L. 46. for *ſays juſtly*, read *expreſſes himſelf thus*. Col 3. L. 8. dele *only*. After the firſt Quotation in *Milton*, there were ſeveral Lines omitted by the Printer, which makes the Sequel unintelligible; which I muſt beg the Reader to inſert as follows:

The Variety of Images in this Paſſage is infinitely pleaſing, and the Recapitulation of each particular Image, with a little varying of the Expreſſion, makes one of the fineſt Turns of Words that I have ever ſeen: Which I rather mention, becauſe Mr. *Dryden* has ſaid in his Preface to *Juvenal*, That he could meet with no Turn of Words in *Milton*. It may further, *&c.*

N. B. The Reader is deſired not to pronounce any Thing in any one of theſe Writings Nonſence, till the following Paper comes out.

Advertiſements.

SIR William Read, Her Majeſty's Oculiſt in Durham-Yard in the Strand, London, by his long Practice, and great Experience, has lately found out a Medicine that clarifies the Eyes from Suffuſions, and ſtrengthens the Optick Nerves; which infallibly prevents Cataracts in the Beginning, and preſerves the Sight in Old or Young. He likewiſe couches Cataracts without Pain, or much Confinement, if they apply themſelves to him before damaged by Pretenders; as will be atteſted by many Perſons of Quality and others that have found the good Effect thereof. He alſo cures Hair-Lips, or Wry Necks, tho' never ſo deformed; or contracted Limbs; and has lately taken off ſeveral Wens of a great Bigneſs; particularly one from a Gentlewoman that weigh'd 26 Pounds, without any Effuſion of Blood, after the Application of his Styptick Water, which all People may be furniſh'd with at his Houſe, with the Medicines for the Eyes above-mention'd, and by my Lady Read in his Abſence.

A GOOD Houſe, handſomely and compleatly furniſhed, is to be let, or Part, for Six Months, or a Year; ſtanding in a pleaſant Place near the Park, and the Court at St. James's. It is fit for a Perſon of Quality, or any Gentleman, or Lady, that has not a large Family. Direction is left at Giles's Coffee-houſe at the upper End of Pall-Mall near St. James's Gate.

Juſt publiſh'd,

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THE Famous POWDER for the STONE, GRAVEL, and STRANGURY, that has perform'd ſo many remarkable Cures in thoſe Caſes, of which there are continued Inſtances. Certificates whereof, together with the Names and Places of Abode of many that have been reliev'd by it, too numerous to be inſerted here, are to be ſeen at Mr. Rogers's, Bookſeller in Fleetſtreet. There are likewiſe ſeveral large Stones that it has brought away from divers Perſons, to be ſeen at Mr. Aylmer's, Bookſeller in Cornhil: At both which Places only it is to be ſold, for 5 s. the Paper, which contains 3 Doſes, with Directions. The Perſon who prepares it, is to be ſpoken with every Tueſday and Thurſday, between 11 and 12, at Mr. Rogers's Shop above-mention'd.

AT Peterborough-Houſe near the Horſe-Ferry, Weſtminſter, is to be ſold a Parcel of printed Callicoes, and curious Pictures, with all Sorts of fine Japan and China-Wares, with Lacquered, and other Indian Goods. As alſo, Houſhold Goods, a large and ſmall Beam with Iron Weights, all new; a very good Cart, intended for the Whiſters Buſineſs, with Horſe-Furniture thereto; lately the Goods of Mr. Henry Bull. Attendance will be daily given till all are ſold.

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